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The DIVINITY *of* JESUS CHRIST, *prov'd from the Words of* Thomas, *My* LORD, *and my* GOD.

A

SERMON

Preach'd at

EXON,

Sept. 9. 1719.

Before an

Aſſembly of the United Miniſters of

Devon and *Cornwal.*

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By WILLIAM PALKE.

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JOHN XX. 28.

Thomas *answered and ſaid unto Him, my* LORD *and my* GOD.

THESE Words contain a principal Branch of that Faith which was once deliver'd unto the Saints: Which it concerns all Chriſtians, and eſpecially Miniſters, to keep ſafe as a ſacred Treaſure, and to contend for earneſtly whenever there appears any Danger of loſing it.

HOW neceſſary this Contention is now I need not ſay; neither, I conceive, can it be thought unſuitable to the preſent Occaſion. My Deſign in inſiſting on this Subject is to conſider it as a Proof of the true and proper Divinity of JESUS CHRIST, in order to which, I propoſe to obſerve the following Method.

I. I SHALL explain the Words.

II. LAY down a few Propoſitions for the Illuſtration of what I intend to prove.

III. SHEW the Force and Strength of the Argument, or what Proof of our Saviour's Divinity the Words contain.

I. I DESIGN to explain the Words, and ſhall endeavour to lay open the meaning of 'em ſo far as may be of Uſe to my preſent Purpoſe.

HERE are two Titles aſcrib'd to Jeſus Chriſt, LORD and GOD.

1. LORD, This Word imports Propriety, or Dominion. 'Tis oftentimes us'd in Scripture by way of Eminency, for the Name of God, thus He is ſtiled, *the Lord.* But here is no Difficulty, and therefore I ſhall proceed to the next Title.

2. JESUS CHRIST is here called GOD. What the meaning of this Name is, will be beſt underſtood by conſidering it under a twofold Diſtinction. It is us'd either *properly* or *improperly*; in an *Abſolute* or a *Relative* Sence.

(1.) THE Name of God is us'd either properly or improperly: *Properly*, that is, in its firſt and chief meaning, which ſignifies *One infinitely perfect Being.* And comprehends under it all that is truly Excellent. Thus I am ſure the ſacred Scriptures repreſent that Being whom we call GOD, and make Uſe of a vaſt Variety of Expreſſions to ſet forth the glorious Excellency of his Nature, that ſo we might think of Him in the beſt manner that the Imperfection of our Underſtandings will admit. All this then is comprehended under that Name; and there can't be any Reaſon for confining it to any one particular Attribute or Relation belonging to Him, or for excluding any Thing that the Scriptures ſay concerning Him.

BUT then, as the word GOD, is ſometimes, and that for the moſt Part, uſed properly; ſo, at other Times, it is uſed *improperly* and figuratively, in the ſame

ſame manner that the Scriptures aſcribe Eyes, Hands, and Feet to God. Thus the Name of GOD, is ſometimes given to Angels and Men, not to ſignify the Nature of God; or that they are really and truly, what the Word in its Original Uſe and proper meaning doth imply, but in a very different Sence, as is uſual with all figurative Expreſſions. And there can never be ſo wide a Diſtance in the meaning as when the ſame Word is applied both to Finite and Infinite. The utmoſt that the Name of God can amount to, when ſpoken of any Creature is, that it hath ſome faint Shadow or imperfect Reſemblance of the great Creator.

(2.) ANOTHER Diſtinction belonging to the Name of God is this; it is ſometimes uſed in an *Abſolute*, and ſometimes in a *Relative* Sence. *Abſolutely*, The Name of *God* ſignifies his Nature and Perfections, and ſpeaks of Him as He is *in himſelf without any reſpect to his Creatures.* Thus *Iſaiah* xlvi. 9. *I am God, and there is none elſe, I am God and there is none like Me.* In the next Verſe, he ſets forth the Greatneſs and Excellency of his Nature by his foreknowing Things to come, *declaring the End from the Beginning, and from Ancient Times the Things which are not yet done.* In other Places He is deſcrib'd by other Perfections; He is called, *the High and Lofty One who inhabiteth Eternity, whoſe Name is Holy.* 'Twere endleſs to recite all that the Scriptures ſay concerning God. They give us a large Deſcription of His glorious Perfections; all which is very well ſummed up in the *Aſſemblies Catechiſm.* " God is a Spirit, Infinite, Eternal, " Unchangeable, in His Being, Wiſdom, Power, " Holineſs, Juſtice, Goodneſs and Truth ".

HEREBY we are enabled to underſtand in ſome Meaſure what God is *in himſelf*, and to form a true and real, tho' imperfect Conception of his Nature; and this, the word JEHOVAH is put to ſignify, which as it is the proper Name of the

One only Living and true God; ſo is never uſed, even of Him, in a Relative Sence.

BUT what is meant by the Name of GOD uſed relatively, as in my Text, MY GOD. It ſpeaks of the ſame Being, and contains under it the Abſolute Sence, but adds another Notion, *viz.* That peculiar Reſpect and Relation which He bears to his own People, which as it is always the Effect of ſome Covenant, ſo it implies theſe Two Things.

[1] THAT this People are under all the moſt powerful Obligations to ſerve and glorify Him as God. [2] That in Caſe they fulfill their Engagements he will Reward them and do them good as God (that is) ſo as becomes a Being ſo great and bountiful; both theſe Things are implyed when He is pleaſed to call himſelf the GOD of any People. Thus, in the Preface to the Ten Commandments, When He ſaith, I am the Lord *thy God*; The meaning is, That as He hath a Right to all our Worſhip and Obedience, ſo he is able to Reward it, in the beſt manner poſſible: And ſo nothing could be more fitly ſet before the Ten Commandments than this Title, becauſe it repreſents our Duty as moſt reaſonable, and at the ſame Time gives the greateſt Encouragement to a ſincere Performance of it. I ſhall open this a little more diſtinctly in a few Particulars.

1.) THERE is a peculiar Honour due to God by Reaſon of the incomparable Excellency of his Nature and glorious Perfections: This Honour we call *Worſhip*. I know 'tis pretended * that the Worſhip of God is only founded on his Authority, but this is not only without Scripture-warrant but directly contrary to it, when we are commanded *to pray to God in ſecret*, He is conſider'd as

* Dr. *Clark*'s Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 23

as *ſeeing in Secret* *. And indeed to what Purpoſe ſhou'd we pray to Him at all, or how could we hope to have our Prayers anſwered were we not aſſur'd both that He is every where preſent, and that He knows and is able to ſupply all our Wants. Again, we are told, that *God is a Spirit* and, upon this Ground, required *to worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth* †. We are commanded *to give Him the Glory due unto His Name* *. And what is meant by that, but the aſcribing to him all thoſe glorious Excellencies, which appear in his Word and Works? And again, *Who ſhall not Praiſe thee for Thou only art Holy* †.

2.) GOD hath an unalienable Right to this Honour from all his Creatures; and this Right is founded on thoſe great Things He hath done for them. 1. In Creation, *Pſalm*, xcv. 6, 7. *O come let us Worſhip, and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, for He is our God and we are the People of his Paſture.* 2. In a Way of Providence. He maintains us, in Life and Being, is our Supreme Lord and Governour. 3. As to fallen Man theſe Obligations are farther ſtrengthned by his being their Redeemer. We are *bought with a Price*, and therefore ought to glorify him that bought us *with our Souls, and with our Bodies which are his* *.

3. IN Order to encourage this Worſhip and Service, GOD hath been pleaſed to promiſe that He will beſtow the moſt deſireable Reward on thoſe that do it ſincerely; and this is moſt comprehenſively and ſignificantly expreſs'd by calling himſelf *their* GOD. For ſeeing God is the Supreme good, and able to beſtow the higheſt Happineſs on his Creatures, in ſtiling himſelf the God of any People he doubtleſs intends to ſignify, that he will do them good in ſuch

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* Matth. vi. 6. † John iv. 24. ‡ Pſ. xcvi. 8.
° Rev. xv. 4. ‡ 1 Cor. vi. 20.

ſuch a manner, as ſhall make it plainly appear that *He is not aſhamed to be called their God*; as the Apoſtle *Paul* argues from this very Title *: And hence it was made Uſe of, by our Saviour, to confute the Error of the *Sadducees*, who held that there is no Reſurrection †.

4.) As there are none that worſhip God ſincerely, beſides his own peculiar People, ſo none elſe have any Right to the promiſed Reward. Neither can any become the People of God without their own Conſent.

5.) THIS mutual Relation is made in and by the Covenant of Grace, which contains the Terms requir'd of us on the one Part, and the Promiſes of good Things to be fulfilled by God on the other Part; and whenever any Perſon doth unfelgnedly dedicate himſelf to the Service of God, He is immediately regarded and treated by God as one of his People. This is the Tenor of the New Covenant, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People* ‡. I proceed,

II. To lay down a few Propoſitions for the Illuſtration of the Point which I deſign to prove.

1. FROM what hath been already ſaid it appears, that there is no Ground for the Diſtinction between a *Supreme* and *Subordinate* God. There is no other God properly ſo called beſides him who is Supreme: This is implied in the very Notion of God, as he is diſcovered by the Light of Nature and of Revelation: And therefore the Queſtion is not rightly ſtated, Whether Jeſus Chriſt be Supreme God? Becauſe this ſeems to imply that there may be a Subordinate God; but, Whether he be called ſo properly, or only in the figurative

* Heb. xi. 15. † Matthew, xxii. 32. ‡ 2 Cor. vi. 16.

figurative Senſe? That is, Whether he be God truly and in very Deed, or in Name and Title? For if we can prove him to be properly God, it undeniably follows that he is Supreme.

2. THOUGH we deny that Jeſus Chriſt is ſubordinate to the Father, as God; yet we own that, in other Reſpects, he may be and is ſubordinate. We can by no means grant, that he is a ſubordinate God, or that his Nature and Eſſence is really inferiour to, or different from, that of the Father; yet 'tis certain, he hath been ſent and employed by the Father, in the Quality of Mediator to accompliſh the Work of our Redemption: And in that Reſpect muſt be ſubordinate. That he is ſo, as Man, is moſt evident; and that even as he is the Eternal Son of God, he is in ſome ſort ſubordinate to the Father (that is, as uſually expreſt in point of Order) hath been the Opinion, both of the Ancient Fathers, and of Modern Divines in general, even thoſe, who moſt ſtrenuouſly oppoſe an Inferiority of Nature.

3. SEEING Jeſus Chriſt hath the ſame Nature and Eſſence with the Father, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that he is one and the ſame God. It is moſt certain that there is but one God. The Scriptures declare it, as expreſsly as is poſſible; and yet they as expreſsly aſſure us, that Jeſus Chriſt is really and truly God. How can we remove this Difficulty, or reconcile this ſeeming Contradiction, but by ſaying they are ONE GOD? They that will deny this, muſt run themſelves upon real Abſurdities far greater than any they can pretend to faſten on the received Doctrine of the TRINITY: For either they muſt deny that Jeſus Chriſt is true God, or elſe ſay, there are two Gods. They think indeed to avoid this Difficulty, by ſaying, that there is but one Supreme God and, that the Father is *He*, but in vain; for ſhould we grant this, the Difficulty would ſtill remain. If the Son be not

one

one God with the Father, there muſt needs be two Gods, whether equal or unequal, that can ſignify nothing; ſeeing both Father and Son are God as all grant, they muſt be, either two Gods or one God, there is no other ſuppoſition poſſible.

4. THO', in Conformity with Scripture, we believe that Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, are one God; yet upon the ſame Ground we aſſert, that there is a real Diſtinction between them; and, in order to expreſs this Diſtinction, we call them Perſons: So that it can't with any Reaſon be pretended, either that we hold no more than one Perſon, or that the word, as we uſe it, hath no meaning. Tho' we know not how great this Diſtinction is, nor clearly underſtand wherein it conſiſts; yet ſurely we know what is meant by a real Diſtinction, and therefore, if we uſe the word Perſon, as a Name common to Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, conſidered as diſtinct from each other, and with Intention, to expreſs that Diſtinction, 'tis evident it hath ſome Meaning. In a word we mean all that which the Scripture doth, when it ſpeaks of them, in the ſame manner as we are wont to do of three different Perſons in the common Senſe of the word, *viz.* That they are ſo diſtinct in one Reſpect as is conſiſtent with their Unity in another; and, that notwithſtanding this Unity the Diſtinction muſt be very conſiderable is evident many Ways, particularly, in that the Son took upon him the Humane Nature and ſuffered in it, not the Father, or the Holy Ghoſt.

5. THO' we know but little of this Diſtinction of Perſons; yet that little is ſufficient to anſwer all thoſe Ends and Purpoſes for which it was reveal'd, *John* xx. 31, The Apoſtle tells us, theſe Things are written, *that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have Life through his Name.* As Faith is the firſt, and more immediate End of Divine Revelation,

lation, ſo in a more eſpecial manner Faith in Chriſt as the Son of God. Now we muſt know, in ſome Meaſure, what is meant by his being the Son of God, how elſe can we believe it; and know it we may, ſeeing the Scriptures aſſure us that he is ſo the Son of God, as to be really and truly God, thus we may know what Excellencies and Perfections, he is poſſeſt of, together with the Father, and that as a Son he is a diſtinct Perſon and proceeds from the Father, this we know, and therefore may believe it, and if we believe, it indeed, that Faith will bring us to Life eternal. We can't believe what we don't know, but ſurely our Faith may Reach ſo far as our Knowledge. Tho' we ſee not enough to ſatisfy Reaſon, we may have a firm and ſtedfaſt Perſwaſion of what we do ſee: What God reveals is moſt certainly true, tho' we can't comprehend, the manner of it: It concerns not us to queſtion, how theſe Things can be; but only to underſtand them ſo far as it hath pleaſed God to reveal them, and then believe readily and ſtedfaſtly. And as this is ſufficient to our believing it, ſo alſo to our underſtanding thoſe other great Truths which depend upon it, as particularly the work of Redemption, which otherwiſe muſt appear perplex'd and intricate at leaſt, if not altogether unintelligible; it is ſet before us as a Matter that highly deſerves, both our Love and Wonder, that God himſelf ſhould become Man, and die in our ſtead: Now unleſs we underſtand and believe, the Diſtinction of Perſons in the Godhead, we can't rightly apprehend theſe great Truths, for 'tis moſt certain that God is offended by the Sins of Men, and muſt have a Satisfaction made to him, how then can God be the Surety alſo, unleſs there be more Perſons than one who are truly God: Thus we may underſtand how God was in Chriſt reconciling the World to himſelf.

6. THIS Doctrine, how ſtrange or unlikely ſoever it may ſeem, is not any way abſurd or unreaſonable. Did we ſay indeed, that God were Three and One in the ſame Reſpect it would be a Contradiction; but to ſay that he is Three and One, in different Reſpects, that is Three Perſons and one God, is ſo far from being Contradictory, that the very ſame manner of ſpeaking is true of ourſelves: Every one of us is two, and yet but one; two, as conſiſting of Soul and Body, and yet but one Man; not that I think this a fit Repreſentation of the ſacred Trinity. I bring it not for that Purpoſe, and verily believe there is nothing in Nature capable of repreſenting, with any Meaſure of Clearneſs or Propriety, that great Myſtery. And this is that which makes all the Difficulty of believing it, tho' indeed it is no good Reaſon at all for not believing it; for why ſhould it be thought incredible, that there is ſomewhat to be known concerning the Divine Nature, which nothing Finite or Viſible can repreſent? Why may there not be very good Reaſons for leaving this Doctrine in ſo great a Meaſure dark and obſcure? I am ſure, there are a great many Truths own'd of all Sides that we can give very little Account of, and about which a ſubtle Wit might ſtart many ſuch Difficulties, as the wiſeſt Man would be at a Loſs to anſwer.

7. SEEING this Doctrine is above the Reach of Reaſon, t muſt be tryed by Scripture alone. Reaſon hath nothing at all to do either one way or t'other, but only to diſcover, what is the Mind of God in Scripture. And when we come to ſearch the Scriptures we muſt by no means bring any Prejudices with us, but examine every thing fairly and impartially, and judge according to the beſt Light and Evidence we can get. If we firſt form our Schemes and Notions in our own Imaginations, and then ſearch the Scriptures only to maintain,

tain and defend them, we take the wrong Courſe, and can't reaſonably expect that God ſhould bleſs or aſſiſt us in it. We are naturally very much influenc'd by a vain Curioſity, and can't be content to be ignorant of thoſe Things which are unrevealed: This is apt to lead us into Errors, and therefore ſhould be check'd and controul'd; it is much more ſafe and becoming ſuch imperfect Creatures to ſubmit to Divine Revelation intirely without Reſerve or Exception; Reaſon muſt not meddle with that which is above its reach. I come,

III. To prove that JESUS CHRIST, is truly and properly GOD. The Words of my Text are very plain and expreſs to this Purpoſe: here are two Names, or Titles of the only true God, aſcribed to him, LORD, and GOD; the former indeed, *my Lord*, doth not neceſſarily thus ſignify: The proper meaning of Lord, is One that hath Right or Dominion over others, and therefore to call Jeſus Chriſt the Lord of any Perſon may ſignify no more than that he hath Right to govern, and diſpoſe of that Perſon, but yet if we conſider, that God himſelf is often called the LORD, by way of Eminence in the *Old Teſtament*, and that this Title is uſually applied, to Jeſus Chriſt in the *New*, we ſhall ſee very good Reaſon to conclude that he is really and truly God, even one God with the Father, eſpecially if we add, that what is the *Lord* in our Tranſlation, is very often *Jehovah*, in the Original, which is the incommunicable Name of the one only living and true God, and that Jeſus Chriſt is called by that Name in ſeveral Places. This alone would be a full and unanſwerable Proof of this important Article. But I ſhall chiefly inſiſt on the ſecond Title, *my God*, that Jeſus Chriſt is called GOD is too plain to be denyed, but the Queſtion is about the meaning of the Word, and

here what its more uſual and proper Signification is can't be doubted, that it hath the ſame meaning when applied to our Saviour, ought not to be denied without very good Proof, for the Word of God being deſign'd for our Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, we muſt needs ſuppoſe that it reveals every thing which is of great Importance to be known, with ſufficient Plainneſs, and ſeeing the knowledge of God through Jeſus Chriſt is moſt neceſſary, 'tis highly improbable that we are left in ſuch uncertainty with Reſpect to his very Name, as not to be able to know, when it belongs to the Creator, and when to the Creature, I acknowledge that ſometimes the Name of God is applied to Men, and to Angels, but yet 'tis always with ſufficient Diſtinction; but 'tis given to Jeſus Chriſt in the ſame manner as to the Father many Times without any Diſtinction at all, and never ſo as to manifeſt any Inequality or Diverſity of Nature, between them, thus 'tis ſaid that *God was manifeſt in the Fleſh* *, and the Elders of *Epheſus* are charg'd *to feed the Church of God, which he Purchaſed with his own Blood* †, and again hereby perceive we the Love of God, becauſe *He laid down his Life for us* ||. and *John* i. 1, *In the Beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.* That the Name of God is here applied to different Perſons is moſt certain but why it ſhould have two vaſtly different Significations, I can ſee no Reaſon, I am ſure there is not the leaſt Intimation either in the Text or Context; from whence we may gather it, neither do the Scriptures give Account of any other meaning which can poſſibly agree to the Perſon here ſpoken of, and beſides, tho' the Name of God taken Abſolutely hath been apply'd to Creatures, yet never when uſed Relatively, there is not one Text

* 1 Tim. iii. 16. † Acts xx. 28. || John iii. 16.

Text of Scripture to be produc'd wherein my God, or thy God, or the God of any People, is meant of any beſides the One only living and true God, but now Jeſus Chriſt is call'd by an Apoſtle, *my God*, and that with the Approbation of our Lord himſelf. I ſhall inlarge upon this Argument a little more diſtinctly under theſe two Particulars.

1. JESUS CHRIST was the God of *Iſrael* under the *Old Teſtament*.

2. HE is the God of all Believers, Now

1. JESUS CHRIST was the God of *Iſrael* under the *Old Teſtament*. The God of *Abraham*, of *Iſaac*, and of *Jacob*. And this, as every one that is acquainted with the ſacred Writings know, was the peculiar Stile and Title, of the true God: That he was thus called, very often, will evidently appear by comparing the *Old Teſtament* with the *New*. Thus *Exodus* xx. 2, *I am the Lord thy God, who have brought thee out of the Land of* Egypt, *out of the Houſe of Bondage*: Who it was ſpake this you may ſee *Hebrews* xii. 26. *Whoſe Voice* (ſpeaking of Chriſt) *then ſhook the Earth*, then, that is, at the giving of the Law; ſo alſo *Pſal.* lxviii. 17, 18, *The Chariots of God are Twenty Thouſand even of Thouſands of Angels, the Lord is among them, as in* Sinai, *in the Holy Place*, and then it follows, *Thou haſt aſcended on high, thou haſt led Captivity captive, thou haſt received Gifts for Men*: That God who was among the Angels in *Sinai* at the giving of the Law, did afterwards aſcend on high, and that was our Bleſſed Saviour as you may ſee, *Eph.* iv. 8. And that he was indeed the God of *Iſrael* will be farther evident, if we conſider that this ſame Perſon both deliver'd them out of *Egypt*, and conducted them through the Wilderneſs to *Canaan*; for to this End, he firſt of all appeared to *Moſes* in the Buſh, and is expreſsly called both God, and an Angel, and ſtiles himſelf the God of *Abraham, Iſaac*, and *Jacob*: And who could this be but

the

the Son of God? That Angel who redeem'd *Jacob* from all Evil and to whom he pray'd for a Bleſſing on *Joſeph*'s Children. It is certain that of him all the Ancient Fathers interpreted theſe and many other Places of the *Old Teſtament*; and indeed is own'd by thoſe that will by no means acknowledge the Father and the Son to be one God: But how is this conſiſtent, was there any more than one Godof *Iſrael*? That they deny as well as we, but they pretend, that Jeſus Chriſt was not indeed the God of *Iſrael*, tho' call'd by that Name *; but is this interpreting Scripture or rather giving it the lie? After this way of Dealing, it will ſignify no more than what Men will have it. They would have us produce a Text of Scripture where our Lord is expreſsly called the Supreme God; why, in whatſoever Terms it were deliver'd, it might be anſwered this Way, and would ſignify no more, with thoſe who are reſolved by any means to bring the Scripture to their own Opinion, but they would be thought to have ſome Reaſon for this Interpretation, they ſay, that the Word or Son of God call'd himſelf by this Name only, as he was the Father's Meſſenger, and repreſented his Perſon, and to confirm it alledge, *Rev.* xi. 3. where a created Angel (as they would have it) is brought in, ſpeaking after the ſame manner, but this is all meer Pretence: What greater Preſumption could there be than for a Meſſenger to aſſume the Names, and Titles of him by whom he is ſent? Or when was it ever known, that an Embaſſadour, even from an earthly Prince, took this Honour to himſelf? And will the moſt high God give his Glory to another? Or would the Son of God aſſume not only the Titles, but the Worſhip of God, were it not due to Him? As to the Text, juſt now quoted, it

* Scripture Doctrine, *p.* 94, 97, 105. 212.

it makes nothing to the Purpoſe; for ſhould we grant, that a created Angel ſpeaks in that Place, it can't be ſaid that he aſſumes any Name or Title of God, but indeed there is very good Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that the Angel ſpoken of here, and in other Places of this Book, is no other than CHRIST himſelf. Who elſe can it be that offers up Incenſe with the Prayers of the Saints, *Rev.* viii. 3, 4? And that Jeſus Chriſt was indeed the God of *Iſrael*, I ſhall add Two Texts by way of Confirmation, the firſt is that of *Mal.* iii. 1. *The Lord whom you ſeek ſhall ſuddenly come to his Temple:* That Jeſus Chriſt is here ſpoken of, I believe none will deny; that he is conſidered as the God of *Iſrael*, ſeems to me equally apparent, for how elſe could the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, be call'd his Temple? That Temple which was dedicated to the God of *Iſrael*, and to none elſe, and in which he alone was worſhipped, How could it in any Senſe belong to another? Thus *Luke* i. 16, 17: *And many of the Children of* Iſrael, *ſhall He* (ſpeaking of *John the Baptiſt*) *turn to the Lord their God.* Who is here call'd the Lord God of *Iſrael*, you may ſee in the following Verſe, *And he ſhall go before him in the ſpirit and power of* Elias.

THAT *John Baptiſt* thus went before Jeſus Chriſt is too plain to need Proof; and, therefore, it undeniably follows that he was truly the Lord God of *Iſrael*.

2. JESUS CHRIST is the God of all Believers. Under the Goſpel *Thomas* expreſsly calls him, *my God*, and can we ſuppoſe that he intended to forſake the God of his Fathers? Or to have another God beſides him? Or would our Lord have approv'd of it? Perhaps it may be thought that this may be evaded by the Diſtinction of a Supreme and Subordinate God, but beſides, that I have ſhewn before there is no Ground for this Diſtinction, if there were, it could be of no Uſe here, be-

cauſe this Title had, never before, been given, to any other beſides the moſt High God. Tho' Magiſtrates were call'd Gods, we never read that any of them were addreſs'd with the Title of *My God*. We have an Account of many Kings of *Iſrael*, but of no more than one God of *Iſrael*; and indeed the meaning of the word, as ſet before us in ſacred Writ, is ſuch that it can't be truly applied to any except the Supreme God. Now then if Jeſus Chriſt were truly call'd, *My God*, by *Thomas*; he muſt, as truly, be the God of all Believers: And this will farther appear in theſe Particulars.

(1.) THE ſame Worſhip that is due to the Father is required to be given, to Jeſus Chriſt alſo, *John* v. 23: *That all Men ſhould Honour the Son, even as they Honour the Father*. How muſt we Honour the Father, but by worſhipping Him? This at leaſt is that peculiar Honour which belongs to God alone, and ought not to be given to any meer Creature whatſoever. If then we muſt Honour the Son ſo, or in the ſame manner as we Honour the Father, it neceſſarily follows, that we muſt give Him Religious Worſhip: And accordingly we find, that in Conformity with this Precept, the Diſciples of our Lord did actually worſhip Him; nay, the very Angels are required to perform this Token of Reſpect and Homage to him. If any pretend that the Worſhip, which we ought to render the Son, is different from that which belongs to the Father, they muſt ſhew what ground they have for this Aſſertion, or it will avail them nothing. I am ſure the Scriptures ſpeak of no more than one Kind of Worſhip; and, if Men may invent a Diſtinction when ever they pleaſe, they may evade the plaineſt Scriptures, juſt as the *Papiſts* do the ſecond Commandment, by another ſuch Diſtinction. But as there is no ſuch Diſtinction in Scripture, ſo all Worſhip, all Kinds, and Degrees of Religious Worſhip, and all the Diſtinction, that

that may be ſuppoſed, or can poſſibly be invented, are forbidden, when 'tis ſaid, *Thou ſhalt Worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* This indeed is the main Fundamental Article of the true Religion; And 'tis acknowledg'd, by thoſe that differ from us, that there was no ſuch ſubordinate Worſhip required, or allow'd of, under the Legal Adminiſtration; neither have they any Ground to ſay, there is ſuch under the Goſpel. Our Lord ſaith, that He came not to deſtroy the Law or the Prophets, nay, that he would not have one Jot or Tittle of the Law to paſs away: And, can it be thought that he meant to lay aſide, this main Fundamental Principle; or, Could he bring in the Worſhip of two or three Gods, without altering Religion in its moſt important Articles? 'Tis moſt certain that the Lord Jeſus is repreſented, in Scripture, as the Object of the ſame Worſhip that belongs to the Father; It can't be pretended, that any one Part is denied him; nay, it might be particularly ſhewn that every Part, both of outward and inward Worſhip, hath been actually performed to him. The Martyr *Stephen* prayed to Jeſus Chriſt, and committed his Soul into his hands, when juſt ready to die; the Epiſtles of *Paul*, and of the other Apoſtles, abound with Prayers to him, for Grace, Mercy, Peace, *&c.* and in ſeveral Places give Glory to him, and thank Him for Mercies received. I might ſhew that Faith, Truſt, Fear, *&c.* are due to him, as well as to the Father. But I chooſe to ſpeak more eſpecially of Love, becauſe this ſeems to admit of no Evaſion: Love is the fulfilling of the Law, the Life and Soul of all Religion; it conſiſts of two Parts, the Love of God, and of our Neighbour; theſe are the two great Commandments, on which hang all the Law and the Prophets; to one of theſe two then, our Love to Chriſt muſt be reduc'd, but to which? Not ſurely to the Love of our Neighbour, I hope none will abaſe their Saviour

ſo low as this; and if not, then he muſt be lov'd with all our Heart, and Soul, and Mind, and Strength, which is the very ſame both for Kind and Degree that we are required to give the Father: And, indeed, in loving the Son we love the Father alſo; we can't ſuppoſe that otherwiſe the Father would have imployed his Son in the Work of Redemption, or have made him the Author of thoſe ineſtimable Benefits which deſerve the utmoſt Returns of Love and Thankfulneſs, and the Conſideration of which is moſt apt to work on ingenuous Minds. Surely we can never love our Bleſſed Saviour too much, we have no need to be afraid of over doing here: But were he not indeed one God with the Father, we ſhould have great Cauſe to be afraid of it; for, ſeeing what our Saviour hath done for us; deſerves the utmoſt Love that we can render him, What higher Regard could we pay to the Father, or how ſhould we love Him more? Would not this intrench upon His Honour and Prerogative? But there is not the leaſt Ground for ſuch Fear. As the Father's, and the Son's Love to us are the ſame, ſo muſt our love be to Them.

(2.) THERE are the ſame Reaſons for worſhipping Jeſus Chriſt, as for the Worſhip of the Father. The Scripture aſſigns two Reaſons of Worſhip, the glorious *Excellency* or *Perfection* of God, and the *Right* that he hath in us.

[1.] THE glorious Excellency or Perfection of God. And that this is the ſame, in Jeſus Chriſt, as in the Father, will evidently appear, by conſidering; how the Scriptures deſcribe him for, he is ſaid to be *the Brightneſs of his Fathers Glory* and *the expreſs Image of his Perſon*, and *Coloſſians*, ii. 9. *In Him dwelleth all the Fulneſs of the Godhead Bodily.* I know 'tis ſaid, that by Godhead here, is meant Divine Authority and Dominion. Should we grant this, it would fully prove what

what I bring it for; all Fulneſs of Divine Authority can belong to none, that hath not the Nature and Perfections of God. But indeed there is no ground for that Interpretation; the Godhead ſignifies God himſelf, or the Divine Nature; and there can't be ſo much as the Shadow of any Reaſon, why it ſhould ſignify Authority. Beſides 'tis plain, that in theſe Words, the Apoſtle alludes to the Tabernacle or Temple. As God dwelt in that formerly, ſo doth he now in the Humane Nature of Chriſt; but this latter Dwelling is in a far more excellent Manner: For now it is not only by the outward Signs, and Tokens of his Preſence, but a real and perpetual Abiding, a perſonal Union; the Fulneſs of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily. It was God himſelf dwelt in the Temple of Old, not his Authority only: Thus, to anſwer the Type, it muſt be God himſelf that dwells in the Humane Nature of Chriſt, or elſe the Type would exceed the Antitype, the Shadow, the Subſtance. But farther, it is not only aſſerted in general, That the Divine Nature belongs to Chriſt, but alſo the particular Attributes by which that Nature is deſcribed, and which diſtinguiſh the true God from all others, are evidently aſcribed to him. Doth the moſt high God appropriate to himſelf, as his peculiar Character, that he can *ſearch the Heart*? Jeſus Chriſt doth the ſame, *All the Churches ſhall know*, ſaith he, *that I am he that ſearcheth the Reins and Heart* *. Is the Father Almighty? So is the Son, for he can ſubdue all Things to himſelf, *&c.* he knoweth all Things, he is every where preſent; his goings forth hath been from Everlaſting. Theſe are ſome of the moſt peculiar Excellencies and Properties of God which, being in Scripture aſcrib'd to our Saviour, are

* Scripture Doctrine, *p* 114 †Rev. ii. 23.

an undeniable Argument that he ought to be worſhipped in the ſame manner with the Father.

[2.] ANOTHER Reaſon of Worſhip, is the Right or Propriety which God hath in us; and this Right is founded on the great Things which he hath done for us, in Creation, Preſervation and Redemption: And all theſe Works are particularly and diſtinctly aſcribed to Jeſus Chriſt, as well as to the Father, and therefore it can't be deny'd, that we are his People, and that he hath a Right to our Worſhip and Service. But then, in order to take away the Force of this Argument, 'tis pretended that Jeſus Chriſt was only an Inſtrument in our Creation. I know not what Notion they have of an inſtrumental Creator; but this I am ſure, The Scriptures aſcribe the Creation of the whole World to him, in as plain and ſignificant Expreſſions as can be deſir'd, and in the ſame manner as to the Father, it tells us, That *by him were all Things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, Viſible and Inviſible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers: all Things were created by Him, and for Him,* Coloſſians, i. 16. And again, *All Things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made,* John i. 3. *And thou Lord in the Beginning haſt laid the Foundations of the Earth; and the Heavens are the work of thy Hand,* Heb. i. 10. Now Creation is evidently a work of Infinite Power. A Creature can't be a Creator: He that made all Things muſt needs be God, in the higheſt Senſe of the Word. The Light of Nature will inform us of this Truth; and even the Heathens themſelves, came to know *the Eternal Power and Godhead* of the Creator, by conſidering the Works of his Hands *. If the Heavens declare

* Romans, i. 20.

clare the Glory of God, then he that made the Heavens muſt be truly God; the Nature is the ſame, and therefore the Worſhip muſt be the ſame alſo, as I have ſhewn before: And therefore he hath a Right to us and our Services, even all the Worſhip and Obedience that we can poſſibly render Him.

(3.) THERE are the ſame Incouragements to worſhip the Son, as to worſhip the Father; and the Rewards of Obedience are promis'd, and ſhall be actually beſtowed by him: So that in this Reſpect alſo he is moſt truly our God, *He is the Author of Eternal Salvation to all that obey Him* *; it was purchaſed by his Blood, and at the Laſt Day ſhall be diſpenſed by Him, as the Judge of Heaven and Earth, to all his faithful Servants. By his Word of Promiſe he hath aſſured us, that *whoſoever believeth in Him ſhall never die*; † and by his own Power, *He will raiſe him up at the Laſt Day* ‡. It is moſt certain that Faith in Chriſt, and the Worſhip of Him, are Matters of great Importance; otherwiſe there would not be ſuch glorious Rewards to excite and encourage Men thereunto, nor would the Neglect of it be ſo ſeverely puniſh'd, as we find in *Mark* xvi. 16: *Whoſoever believeth and is Baptized ſhall be ſaved, and whoſoever believeth not ſhall be damned*, and again, *whoſoever ſhall Call on the Name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved* ||. Beſides, as Everlaſting Happineſs is purchas'd, promis'd, and beſtowed by him; ſo doth it conſiſt in the Enjoyment of him: For thus the Apoſtle *Paul*, having ſpoken of the joyful Reſurrection of Believers, and how they that remain alive, ſhall be caught up into the Air to meet the Lord, Adds, as the Sum of all their Happineſs,

* Heb. v. 9. † John xi. 26. ‡ John v. 28, 29.
|| Romans x. 13.

ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord. 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 17.

(4.) IN the Covenant of Grace, we take Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt for our God. This will evidently appear if we conſider, that Baptiſm is a Seal of that Covenant; for thus the Form of Baptiſm runs, *In the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*: What can this mean but that therein, and thereby, we devote ourſelves to the Service of theſe Three Sacred Perſons? It may imply, indeed, that the Ordinance is adminiſtred by their Authority; but this is far from being the Thing principally intended. God never interpoſeth His own Authority, except in Matters of great Importance: And ſuch Baptiſm is moſt truly, yea, the moſt important Concern of our whole Lives, conſidered as a Covenant Tranſaction between God and our Souls. And that it is really ſo I think exceeding Clear; for therein God doth Seal, Confirm, and make particular Application of Goſpel Promiſes to the Perſon baptized. Hence we are ſaid to be baptized for the Remiſſion of Sins; and then, on the other Hand, it as neceſſarily implies that we perform our Part in entring into Covenant with God: And what can that be but the conſenting to take him for our God, reſolving and promiſing, to keep his Commandments? The Profeſſion of our Faith can ſignify nothing without this. We can't be truly ſaid to believe with all our Hearts, unleſs we have Reſpect to all Gods Commandments. Thus you ſee 'tis moſt truly a Covenant Tranſaction: But with whom do we enter into Covenant? That, as I have ſaid, is expreſs'd in the Form of Baptiſm: As the Miniſter baptizeth the Perſon, *In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt*; ſo the baptized Perſon, by offering himſelf to that Ordinance, and profeſſing his Faith in theſe Three

Three bleſſed Perſons, doth moſt truly dedicate himſelf to their Service, ſuppoſing that he is ſincere in what he doth. Now then it evidently follows, that all the ſacred TRINITY is our GOD; and though they are Three Perſons, yet they are but one God: The Act of Worſhip is but One, and therefore it neceſſarily follows, That the Object of Worſhip is but One; in the ſame manner, and at the ſame time, that we dedicate ourſelves to the Father, we alſo dedicate ourſelves to the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt: There is not the leaſt Intimation that our Duty to the One, is greater than our Duty to the Other; what we promiſe to one we promiſe to all. We are hereby obliged to render them, all the Worſhip, and Honour, all the Duty and Service, we are able: And what now need be added, to prove that they are all Three God, truly and properly, yea, equally God, One God.

The APPLICATION.

YOU ſee what ſure Ground there is for the commonly received Doctrine of the BLESSED TRINITY; and, conſequently, that we have no Reaſon to leave it for another Opinion. That the Scripture is the only Rule of Faith, is acknowledged by all Proteſtants. This is the Principle on which the Reformation is built, and we would not willingly act againſt it, in any Reſpect whatſoever. This alone it is that induceth us to believe Three Perſons in the Godhead, of the ſame Nature, and Perfections. And there we build, not on one, or two doubtful Aſſertions, or ſuch Texts as may well enough admit of another Interpretation, but upon a great Number of plain, and expreſs Scriptures, and a vaſt Variety of Proofs drawn from thence, and theſe interpreted according to the main Scope and Drift of the ſacred Writings. We pretend not to bring any Proof from Reaſon, and we are ſure that Right Reaſon can make nothing againſt

againſt it. 'Tis poſſible the Explications of particular Men may be groundleſs, and abſurd; but as it is reveal'd in Scripture, and hath been generally received in the Church of Chriſt, it contains nothing, that after the ſtricteſt ſearch can appear ſhocking to impartial and unprejudiced Reaſon. Its ſtrange we confeſs and myſterious, but we have no Reaſon to disbelieve it, for that; ſince it muſt be own'd that the Nature of God is Incomprehenſible. A Being of Infinite Perfection can be but very little known by finite Creatures. All beſides what our weak and ſhallow Minds can contain muſt be myſterious; and, therefore, if it pleaſe God to reveal any Truth concerning himſelf, which we can't comprehend, we we muſt by no means reject or deny it. What tho' it be but very little that we can underſtand, if that little be ſufficient to anſwer the Ends for which it is reveal'd, we have Reaſon to be ſatisfyed with it: If it be not ſo much as we would willingly know, 'tis ſo much as our All-wiſe Sovereign ſees needful for us; perhaps we are unfit and unworthy to know more, or it may be a neceſſary Trial of the Faith, or Sincerity of Chriſtians: Whatever be the Cauſe that 'tis ſo ſparingly reveal'd, it becomes imperfect Creatures to be ſenſible of their own Ignorance, and to be content with thoſe Diſcoveries, which it hath pleaſed God to make of himſelf. 'Tis poſſible, indeed, that ſubtle Wits may ſtart a great many Difficulties, in the plaineſt Matters; and give ſomewhat of a plauſible Turn to the moſt far fetch'd Interpretation: But that ought not to move us againſt the expreſs Words, and the general Drift of Scripture; eſpecially, if we conſider; what it is they would have us believe inſtead of the commonly received Doctrine of the TRINITY. Could we ſuppoſe it doubtful; yet, unleſs we might change for the better, it muſt be much more prudent to continue as we are. And if we conſider the new Scheme thoroughly,

roughly, we ſhall find that it hath very little to recommend it, but only that it ſeems to remove the Difficulty which we find in conceiving Three Perſons to be One God: It ſeems, I ſay, to remove it, but doth not really; for as it can never be made to agree with Scripture, ſo neither is it well conſiſtent with itſelf. Sometimes they would fain perſwade us, that the Father is the only true God [a] excluſive of the Son: And yet they are obliged to own, that the Son alſo is truly God [b]; and, which is more ſtrange and abſurd, that they are neither Two Gods nor yet One [c]: The Son muſt not be called a meer Creature [d]; but yet it unavoidably follows from thoſe Principles which they have laid down [e]. Sometimes they repreſent him in ſuch a manner as if he were but little inferior to the Father [f]; and yet at other Times it ſeems as evident, that they give him no more than the Name or Title of God [g]: They wou'd be thought to aſcribe all divine Powers or Attributes to him except Supremacy and Independency [h]; but when they explain themſelves 'tis certain they mean nothing leſs, unleſs we will admit that Eternity is a limited Duration; or, that to have a Beginning and no Beginning is the ſame Thing [i]; that there is no Difference between knowing ſome Things and knowing all Things [k]; That a Finite Being may be every where preſent: In a Word, to ſupport this Scheme, they have introduc'd a new Notion of God, and wou'd perſwade us, that we know nothing of Him but this, that he is Governour of the World [l]. But this is as little capable of Proof as any thing they aſſert. It depends on little or nothing more than a confident Aſſertion.

[a] Scrip Doct. *p.* 231. [b] *p.* 73. *p.* 263, 264. he makes the Reaſon of the Name to be the ſame, when applied to the Son, as when applied to the Father. [c] *p.* 300. 272. [d] *p.* 239, 243. [e] *p.* 249. [f] *p.* 266. [g] *p.* 209, 237. [h] *p.* 266. [i] That according to their Notion, the Son is not eternal is plainly proved by Dr. *Waterland*. [k] Compare, *p.* 266. with 132. Page, 114, 300, 263, 264, plain Scrip. Arg. *p.* 827.

AND now, Is it for this, that we muſt leave that Doctrine which hath been ſo generally received in the Church of Chriſt, even ſo far as appears by Ancient Records from the very Beginning of Chriſtianity? What! Becauſe I cannot comprehend this Doctrine, Shall I therefore contradict both Scripture and Reaſon too? Shall I believe that to be true which my own inward Senſe and Experience convince me to be falſe? How can I perſwade myſelf, that a little of that which the Scriptures reveal concerning God is as much as All? That there is no knowing the Nature of God by his Works; that all his Goodneſs conſiſts in doing good to his Creatures; that either He is not good in himſelf, or elſe that we can know nothing of it. Theſe and many other abſurd Conſequences will follow from that Notion.

2. IT greatly concerns all Chriſtians to get themſelves well ſatisfied in this important Matter. The Point in Controverſy is no leſs than about the Object of Worſhip. If Jeſus Chriſt be not our God, He ought not to be worſhipped: If He be, He ought to be worſhipped in the ſame manner as the Father, for He cannot be another God; to hold two Gods, or two Objects of Worſhip is directly contrary to the Foundation of all Religion. Our Lord found fault with the *Samaritans*, for worſhipping they knew not what: And muſt it not be a much greater Crime in us, ſeeing we have ſuch a clear Revelation of the Nature and Perfections of God? We are told with ſufficient plainneſs, what we are to believe concerning Jeſus Chriſt; not only with reſpect to his Humane, but alſo his divine Nature; and that uſually in the very ſame Words and Expreſſions which are made uſe of to deſcribe the Nature and Excellencies of the Father; and conſequently, we have all the Reaſon in the World to underſtand 'em in the ſame Senſe, unleſs the Scripture had let us know in what other

Senſe

Senſe we ought to take 'em; And then it muſt needs follow, that the Son is the ſame in Subſtance with the Father, equal in Power and Glory; Unleſs we can know nothing even of the Father himſelf: But what greater Reflection can we caſt upon the Scriptures? Is it not their principal Deſign to bring us to the ſaving Knowledge of the Truth? And of all Knowledge, is not that of God through Jeſus Chriſt moſt neceſſary? If then, what it reveals concerning God even with greateſt Plainneſs and Evidence be uncertain, What can we depend on? Or, How can we be ſure that we underſtand any Thing of the Mind of God in ſacred Writ? Far would I be from charging any one with a Deſign to leſſen the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, who profeſs a Regard for 'em; but, I muſt needs ſay, it is the direct Conſequence of ſuch Notions. If we know not what they reveal to us concerning the Object of Worſhip, we may well be doubtful in leſs important Matters. And beſides, theſe Opinions tends very much to unſettle Men's Minds, and to keep them from fixing ſtedfaſtly in any Perſwaſion: Or, ſuppoſing that any are fully determined and ſatisfied in their Minds concerning 'em, I cant ſee how 'tis poſſible to act with any Certainty, or to be free from Diſtractions in Worſhip; for, ſeeing they muſt ſo far ſuſpend their Judgments as not to determine whether Jeſus Chriſt be a meer Creature or not, How can they know what Regard they ought to pay to Him? Surely there is a vaſt Difference between a Creature and Him who is not a Creature; between Finite and Infinite: And, accordingly, there muſt be a proportionable Difference between that Reſpect which we give Him as He is one or the other; tho' we may ſuſpend our Judgments we can't ſuſpendour Practice. And in worſhipping Him

we muſt conſider Him either as the Infinite and Eternal Creator, or elſe, as a meer Creature: There is no Medium between theſe wide Extreams. And ſurely it cannot be thought that the ſame Worſhip or Honour will ſuit both, and the Miſtake either Way muſt be very great; Either we muſt Worſhip the Creature as the Creator, or elſe pay no more regard to the great Creator than is due to thoſe which are infinitely beneath Him. And can you think, Sirs, That God hath left us at Uncertainty in Matters of ſuch vaſt Conſequence? Search the Scripture, and you will find that they ſpeak plain enough. Search 'em without Prejudice, and without laying too much ſtreſs on the Words of Men; and you will perceive that the whole Current of ſacred Writ runs againſt theſe new Notions. Surely then, it very much Concerns all Perſons to get themſelves well ſatisfied in this important Matter. Take nothing upon Truſt: Labour to ſee with your own Eyes, and to obtain ſuch entire Satisfaction, that no Doubts or Fears may deject your Spirits, or hinder you in your Work. And, above all, Labour to get into a juſtified State, you are never ſafe till this be done: If God ſhould leave you to yourſelves there is no Error ſo abſurd and dangerous but you might be prevailed with to embrace; and you have no Reaſon to expect otherwiſe, if you reject the calls and offers of Divine Grace. I know 'tis frequently ſaid, That if Men ſincerely Deſire and Endeavour to know the Truth, there is no doubt but they ſhall find it, ſo far at leaſt as is neceſſary to Salvation; but it ought to be taken with due Explication or elſe we ſhall be deceived by it. If by Sincerity here be meant the ſame with what the Scriptures call *godly Sincerity* 'tis very true: But it ſeems to be ſpoken in a large Senſe, and to take in all Kinds and De-

grees

grees of Sincerity; whereas a Man that hath no more than common Grace may be in a conſiderable Meaſure ſincere, yet this is no ſufficient Ground of Security to Him; if He be not ſo far ſincere as to have Reſpect unto all Gods Commandments, he can never be out of Danger, becauſe Knowledge is in Order to Practice. And if Men will not improve what Knowledge they have, 'tis juſt with God, not only to deny them farther Meaſures, but to take away that which they have: Wherefore whatever you do get within the Covenant; preſent your ſelves to God a living Sacrifice, and be not conformed to the World, but be transformed by the renewing of your Minds, then ſhall you prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect Will of God.

3. CONTEND earneſtly, yet ſoberly, and in a manner becoming Chriſtians, for this Faith. Contend earneſtly: Every Truth of God is precious, and ought to be valued highly and kept carefully. But there are ſome Truths more precious than others; and truly, I muſt needs ſay, this is one of them. It concerns us therefore to make Uſe of all thoſe Means which are juſt and lawful to preſerve it, and think no Pains too great to be taken for reclaiming thoſe who have imbibed Errors contrary to it; and for confirming and eſtabliſhing all thoſe who as yet are ſound in the Faith. Contend earneſtly, yet in a manner becoming Chriſtians. Avoid a furious and bitter Zeal, *the wrath of Man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of God.* There is no Credit or Advantage gotten to any Cauſe by violent Methods. Truth is great and will prevail. It acts with leſs Noiſe and Violence than Error, but yet is far more powerful. Tho' for a while it may ſeem too weak to ſtand its Ground, and be almoſt overborn by the Number or Strength, or cunning of its Oppoſers

ſers; yet we may Comfort ourſelves in this, That it will not be of long Continuance. The Truths of the Goſpel will be too hard for all Enemies in the Iſſue: They will recover Strength and gain Ground, let Men do what they will to overthrow 'em. And therefore we may be very well content to make Uſe of no Methods, but ſuch as are righteous and equitable (as hitherto I truſt we may truly ſay we have done.) If we eſpouſe the Cauſe of God, we need not doubt but that He will ſecond and maintain us therein. And that may well ſatisfy us, tho' for the preſent we ſhould not ſee that Effect of our Endeavours which we deſire. And above all, let us labour by our holy and heavenly Converſation to adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour: There's nothing that can recommend any Cauſe ſo much as this; Bleſſed be God, that we can produce ſuch Multitudes of Inſtances of thoſe who lived and died in the ſame Faith which we now profeſs; whoſe Lives have been eminently holy, uſeful and pious; who have ſhin'd as Lights in the World, and brought much Honour to God, much Credit to Religion. Oh! let us take great Heed leſt, by another Courſe, we bring up an evil Report on the Faith or Doctrine which we profeſs. Let All, both Miniſters and People, in their ſeveral Places and Relations, endeavour to recommend all the Truths of the Goſpel; and this more particularly which we are ſo much concern'd to contend for: And in the beſt Manner they are able let 'em ſhew forth the Praiſes of Him *who hath called us out of Darkneſs into his marvellous Light. And now may the God of all Grace, who hath called us unto His Eternal Glory by Chriſt Jeſus, make you perfect, ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you. To Him be Glory and Dominion, for ever and ever.* Amen.

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